

# The Raleigh Amateur Radio Society's **EXCITER**



## RARS EVENTS:

- The RARS General Membership meeting is the 1st Tuesday of the month.
- The RARS net meets every night @ 8 PM on 146.640.
- The RARS Technical & Trader's net is Saturdays @ 8:30 PM or following the RARS net.
- RARS meets for a monthly dinner on the 2nd Tuesday of each month.

## President's Corner

**Column by Karl Bowman W4CHX, RARS President**

It is amazing what goes on at a hamfest. One can attend forums and learn about amateur radio organizations, QRP, contesting, grounding, all types of ham radios, and many other topics. One can spend time at a vendor's booth or at a flea market table listening to what others have to say. There is a lot to be learned there, as well! But, a very important thing that happens at a hamfest is friendship. Being with friends and meeting new friends is great! I am looking forward to the upcoming hamfest season. It is hoped that you are, too!

Speaking of hamfests, RARSfest is less than 2 months away! Volunteers are still needed to assist with setup on Friday, April 22. Please check out the RARSfest page at [www.rars.org](http://www.rars.org). There you will find a new, quick and easy way to sign up to help or you may contact John AI4RT at [ai4rt@hotmail.com](mailto:ai4rt@hotmail.com) if you would like to volunteer. Field Day follows soon thereafter on June 25-26, 2011. David KF4VXJ is working on donations to support Field Day and he could use some help. Please contact David KF4VXJ or Bob W4TTX if you can provide assistance with Field Day. And don't forget, there are many public service events that need assistance. Please visit the RARS website or contact John AI4RT to volunteer for the upcoming public events.

### **Next RARS Meeting: March 1**

7:30 PM: "RARSfest Update" and  
RARS Awards & Birthday Celebration.

## **RARS OFFICERS:**

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## **The Raleigh Amateur Radio Society**

The Raleigh Amateur Radio Society, Inc. (RARS) was founded in 1969 and continues to serve and support the amateur radio community in the greater Triangle area. In 1999, the society incorporated a new RARS and obtained 501(c)(3) non-profit tax status.

The objectives of the club are to promote worldwide friendship through amateur radio; to be of public service by providing radio communications in times of disaster, emergency, or civic needs; to educate members in radio technique, and to provide training classes to assist in obtaining amateur radio licenses.

Anyone interested in amateur radio is eligible to apply for membership. Dues for regular licensed amateurs are \$18 per year (from July 1 through June 30). Additional immediate family members pay \$5 each per year. Dues for licensed amateurs older than 59 or younger than 16 are \$12 per year. Dues for non-licensed associate members are \$9 per year. Applications for membership may be obtained from the treasurer or on the RARS website ([www.rars.org](http://www.rars.org)).



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## **The Exciter**

The *Exciter* is the official newsletter of the Raleigh Amateur Radio Society. It appears each month as a PDF on the RARS website at [www.rars.org](http://www.rars.org). Members receive email notification when the latest version is available. Please provide your email address to the Treasurer.

The *Exciter* welcome articles, advertisements, and other contributions. To submit a piece to the newsletter, please contact the Editor.

The views expressed in the *Exciter* are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor or RARS.

The Editor reserves the right to edit any and all pieces.

The submission deadline for each month's *Exciter* is the third Friday of the preceding month. All submissions must be final. Drafts are not accepted.

Editor: Courtney Enzor KI4HOS ([editor@rars.org](mailto:editor@rars.org))

### **RARS General Meeting**

*Date:* First Tuesday of each month

*Location:* First Alliance Church

4400 Buffaloe Road

Raleigh, NC

*Time:* People begin arriving at 7 PM. The meeting officially begins at 7:30 PM.

### **RARS Monthly Dinner**

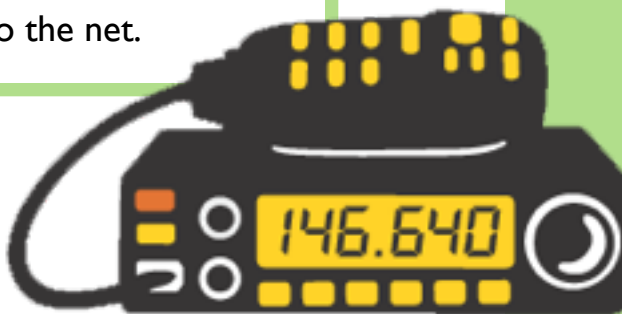
Join us on the 2nd Tuesday of each month for the RARS dinner. It's open to everyone: RARS members, non-members, friends, and family – feel free to bring your little ones! Dinner begins at 6:30 pm.

Listen to the nightly RARS net and check [www.rars.org](http://www.rars.org) for details on the next dinner's location.

### **RARS Repeaters in Raleigh**

145.130 (82.5 PL), 146.640, & 444.525 (82.5 PL)

Join us for the nightly RARS net @ 8 PM on the 146.640. All hams holding a Technician class license or higher are invited to check in. We welcome both RARS and non-RARS member to the net.



## **VE TESTING**

The RARS VEs will accept walk-in testing at the February, May, August, and November RARS meetings; the RARSFest in April; the Cary Swapfest in July; the JARSFest in November; and following RARS license classes.

Please bring a photo ID, your current license, a copy of your current license, your \$15 exam fee, and any CSCEs you have for credit. Visit [www.rars.org](http://www.rars.org) for more information.

### March Birthdays

|        |        |      |
|--------|--------|------|
| Tim    | KD4MBC | 3/1  |
| Carl   | KJ4WD  | 3/1  |
| Marty  | W4MY   | 3/2  |
| Karl   | W4CHX  | 3/6  |
| Sharon | KD4ACK | 3/6  |
| James  | KC9VJ  | 3/8  |
| Rich   | KR4AS  | 3/8  |
| Bruce  | WA9NEW | 3/8  |
| Bob    | KC4CPD | 3/10 |
| Jim    | WA5APR | 3/10 |
| David  | KF4VXJ | 3/12 |
| Bob    | WA4ZZN | 3/12 |
| Tom    | KJ4ULP | 3/14 |
| Larry  | K4LXV  | 3/17 |
| Bill   | K4HVV  | 3/17 |
| Fred   | KJ4RGB | 3/19 |
| Bill   | K4WGE  | 3/20 |
| Greg   | KE4PAX | 3/23 |
| Carl   | W4HJZ  | 3/23 |

### Upcoming Hamfests

|               |                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3/5           | Cave City Hamfest<br>Cave City, KY<br><a href="http://www.arrl.org/hamfests/">http://www.arrl.org/hamfests/</a>                     |
| 3/5-<br>3/6   | BirmingHAMfest (AL State Conv.)<br>Birmingham, AL<br><a href="http://w4cue.com/fest.html">http://w4cue.com/fest.html</a>            |
| 3/12-<br>3/13 | Charlotte Hamfest<br>Harrisburg, NC<br><a href="http://www.w4bfb.org/hamfest.html">http://www.w4bfb.org/hamfest.html</a>            |
| 3/19          | Charleston Area Hamfest<br>Charleston, WV<br><a href="http://www.w8gk.org/docs/">http://www.w8gk.org/docs/</a>                      |
| 3/26-<br>3/27 | Greater Baltimore Hamboree<br>& Computerfest<br>Timonium, MD<br><a href="http://www.thehamfest.com/">http://www.thehamfest.com/</a> |

### New RARS Members

|                   |            |
|-------------------|------------|
| Don Earwood       | K4MQE      |
| Lee Falk          | KJ4ULT     |
| Chris McCormick   | N3JHR      |
| Dan Pope, Jr.     | KJ4UGD     |
| Tana Wooten       | KB3UTX     |
| John Singleton    | N4AJR      |
| John V. Singleton | No License |
| Rebecca Singleton | No License |
| Alex Singleton    | No License |

### January 2011

#### RARS Net Reports

Checkins: 430  
Traffic: 36/30  
Minutes: 655  
Sessions: 31

Special Interest Nets:  
Checkins: 185  
Minutes: 350  
Sessions: 11

# Attention All Seasoned Hams

## Announcement by Chuck Littlewood K4HF

The Quarterly Century Wireless Association Piedmont Chapter 126 will hold its first quarter luncheon meeting March 19 at 11:30am at McCall's BBQ and Seafood Restaurant, Clayton, NC (919-550-3877 and <http://www.mccallsbbq.com/>). Further details and a link to map directions are there.

All members and guests are welcome. Our guest speaker will be Charles Lewis KY4P of West Jefferson. He will be presenting "MyVOA Overseas Broadcasting and Hamming Exploits." More info on our organization is available at <http://www.qcwa.org/> (and for the local Piedmont Chapter: <http://www.qsl.net/qcwa126/>). Local Raleigh contacts include Chuck K4HF and Charlie, WB4DCM.

## RARS Field Day Pix in December QST

### Article by Gary Pearce KN4AQ, RARS Public Information Officer

That's "domed," not "doomed!" The RARS 20 meter phone at Field Day is featured in the Up Front section of the December 2010 QST! Andy NI4S and Dennis NC4DK show picture, taken by Bob W4TTX. By the way, Bob will be our new Field Day Chairman for 2011.

Meanwhile, 2010 Chair Mike Murphy WA4BPJ can be proud of RARS FIRST PLACE in 8A! OK, we can all be proud. Here's our listing in QST:

|                         |   |     |                      |            |  |
|-------------------------|---|-----|----------------------|------------|--|
| <b>8A</b>               |   |     |                      |            |  |
| Raleigh ARS             |   |     |                      |            |  |
| W4DW (+W4RNC)           |   |     |                      |            |  |
| 3920                    | 2 | 61  | 12,802               | NC         |  |
| Gloucester City ARC     |   |     |                      |            |  |
| W2MMD 2848              | 2 | 24  | 11,306               | SNJ        |  |
| Rappahannock Valley ARC |   |     |                      |            |  |
| K4TS (+NX4Q)            |   |     |                      |            |  |
| 2938                    | 2 | 49  | 10,450               | VA         |  |
| Cuyahoga ARS            |   |     |                      |            |  |
| W8BM 2336               | 2 | 30  | 8,454                | OH         |  |
| Gwinnett ARS            |   |     |                      |            |  |
| W4GR 2232               | 2 | 150 | 7,516                | GA         |  |
| DuPage ARC              |   |     |                      |            |  |
| W9DUP (+K9RMZ)          |   |     |                      |            |  |
| 1718                    | 2 | 66  | 7,132                | IL         |  |
| Mahoning Valley ARA     |   |     |                      |            |  |
| W8QLY (+W8LZC)          |   |     |                      |            |  |
| 1362                    | 2 | 63  | 4,876                | OH         |  |
| <b>76</b>               |   |     | <b>December 2010</b> | <b>QST</b> |  |



# Field Day: So You Want to Be a Band Captain

## Article by Cliff Broughton W4FT

So you will be a Band Captain at Field Day, or maybe you're an Assistant Band Captain, but you're not quite sure what you need to do to make Field Day a success? Not to worry. After serving as a Band Captain and helping with the FD organizing for several years, at one of the world class operations in the U.S., I thought it was time to pass on some of my experience and opinion. So let's dig in and get you started.

Deciding what is needed is easy. Making it happen is the hard part. As a Band Captain, you have to assure that there's an operational station that is both safe and effective. Hmmm, sounds like a drug commercial.

### **Find Assistants and Coordinate!**

The first rule of being a Band Captain (we'll call you the BC for now on) is that you are the station COORDINATOR! If you want to have a successful Field Day and have a lot of fun doing it, then you need to put the effort in to coordinate all the activities of the station. Look at it this way – the FD Chairman is delegating a lot of responsibility to each BC and to some other special assistants for the event. In turn, you need to expend time and effort to line up people to help you execute your plan for your station at Field Day. This is most definitely a *team effort*! Don't try to do it all yourself!

You may think that as BC, or Assistant BC (ABC), that you need to bring everything needed for field day. Many of the experienced BC's do just that. They've accumulated all the equipment over the years and it is easier for them to do it that way. But it isn't a requirement. In fact, you'll have more fun if you can delegate specific tasks to others.

### **Delegate, Delegate, Delegate!**

Take some time to plan out the major areas of effort for your station. Once you have that, find some people to act as Assistants to take over these areas. Here is a possible list of operational areas that you should consider. You can combine or divide these, and add or subtract as you see fit.

1. Station Setup  
Setup of the station environment, tent or trailer, generators, radio setup, tables, chairs, etc.
2. Antenna Installation  
This is the actual installation of the antennas, feed line, etc. This is separate from the station setup because it is potentially a major task unto itself. It is

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usually a very time consuming project and should be done in parallel with station setup.

3. **Station Takedown**  
Responsibility for taking everything apart – all the radios, tuners, support equipment, generators, cabling, etc. It's also about making sure everything gets back to its owners in the same condition that it was received.
4. **Antenna Takedown**  
This will depend on the nature of the antennas. Wire antennas can be taken down quickly and could possibly be combined with Station Takedown. Beams on temporary towers can be labor intensive and time consuming, requiring a separate effort.
5. **Operational**  
Someone needs to be responsible for the operation of the station, i.e., the control operator. This could cover scheduling operators, handling generator refueling, or anything else that comes along. This is a good one to schedule shifts between different people.
6. **Logistics**  
This is about making sure that everything gets to the FD site at the right time, coordinating with the Field Day Logistics person, if there is one, getting supplies lined up, etc. It also comes into play with teardown and return of equipment and supplies.
7. **Food and Comfort**  
Is this being handled by someone else for the overall FD event, or does each Band Captain need to arrange for food, snacks, drinks, restroom facilities, etc.? Even if there is someone cooking dinner for everyone, you'll still want to have snacks and drinks at the station. This may be part of Logistics, or something that needs to be handled separately.

However you plan to divide up the workload, get help! You might have a lot of overlap in the work assignments, but the key is to share the load! Don't try to do it all yourself!

### **Plan Early, Plan Often!**

Start planning in January or February. If you wait until June 1, you've waited far too long! Get together with your assistants regularly. Use email, phone calls, whatever works. The frequency of contacts will increase as Field Day approaches. If you notice that the urgency of these contacts is getting unusually high, that's a red flag that something's not going right. If you're doing it well, things will go smoothly all the way through.

### **Don't Forget the Other Band Captains.**

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Most of this article discusses what you'll need to do for your station. But remember, there are other stations too. You need to coordinate with all of them. It's the FD Chair's responsibility to make sure that all the stations play nice together, but you should be aware of what is to come. You need to operate harmoniously with the other stations. That means making sure that the stations are separated geographically and antennas placed to minimize interference. Certain stations need to be as far apart as possible. Others can be in the same tree and tent.

More importantly, what about the radios? Does the radio that you plan to use have good rejection, or is it going to see interference from every other station at the site? Worse, is your operation going to interfere with everyone else? The former is a big problem, the latter is a catastrophe. Find radios that work well in these environments. Generally speaking, mobile HF radios will be problematic where base radios do much better. There are exceptions on both sides.

Certain stations will compete. For instance, while most stations are fixed on a given band and mode, the GOTA station can go to any band and mode at any time. This is a recipe for problems. When stations start competing (GOTA and others, or CW and Digital on the same band) the solution is coordination between band captains.

In the worst case though, the FD Chair should be willing and prepared to settle any disputes or to shut down a station that is interfering with all the others.

### **People First!**

The most important task you have is to sign up people to work with you. Start today! The other BCs are competing with you to get their help too. It's a limited pool of people in the club. It is critical that you get enough people lined up to help with setup and teardown. Don't try to do it all, spread the work around – it'll be more fun in groups.

Most new BCs try to do everything themselves. They have too few people helping, or wishy washy responses where they should have firm commitments and scheduled activities (setup, teardown, etc.) The result is that the BC will work themselves to death during setup, working into the night to get things done, don't have many operators, and are exhausted from being overworked and overheated even before the first contact. They're hot, tired and sweaty at 3:00 on Saturday because they spent all morning and afternoon in the heat finishing the work and missed the start because it took too long. They don't have any fun and the station suffers because of it. Imagine how they feel when teardown rolls around. Then imagine how they feel next year when the FD Chair asks them to do it again!

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Every year, there are plenty of new hams or new Generals that want to learn about building and putting up antennas and assembling stations. **SIGN THEM UP EARLY!** They want to see what goes into a station while they're planning their own. They're also eager to help, as long as they're working with someone that will show them the way. This can be one of the most rewarding parts of FD for a new ham.

Elmering is a big part of Field Day. Once you have all those eager new hams lined up, remember to get some skilled hams to act as Elmers and to lead the small groups tasked to a particular area. Find someone to both lead the station or antenna setup and to explain along the way. These people are the ones that you will delegate to, that you will trust to get the job done right, that will make the journey fun for the newer hams, and will take some of the load off your shoulders.

So where do you get the volunteers? Anywhere you can! Make announcements at club meetings and on the local repeater nets. Send out emails. Call your buddies. Whatever works.

You should be on any local nets asking for operators often. Remind them that they don't even need a license (or an upgrade), as long as there's a control op. I wouldn't be on every night, but two or three nets a week starting in mid-May is a nice balance. In recent years, our club started running Field Day Planning Nets twice a week on the local repeater. This is a great resource for helping with planning and recruiting.

### **Operators! Remember the Operators!**

Do you want to work the station alone? **NO!** Be sure to get operators lined up to work the station during the whole 24 hours of Field Day! Some years, this is easy, other times, you just won't be able to fill up the schedule. Do the best that you can by starting early. Before June, this is generally about getting people interested in operating your station. You probably don't need to worry about setting up a schedule early on, but when June 1<sup>st</sup> rolls around, you need to start scheduling operators for specific times. As FD approaches, get that schedule filled!

Again, get on the local nets and make announcements at club meetings. Use the club's email reflector. Put articles in the club newsletter. Use smoke signals if it works! Again, remind them that they don't even need a license (or an upgrade), as long as there's a control op.

Now, think about what the schedule needs to look like. How many ops do you need to schedule per block? The answer is "up to three" – an Operator, a Logger and a Control Operator. At certain times, usually during the middle of the night, you'll have trouble

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staffing the station. If necessary, one person can fill all three rolls, operating and logging. By definition, the operator will be the control operator.

Usually, an additional person will serve as the Logger, logging all the contacts, while the Operator focuses on making contacts. Either person can serve as the Control Operator.

Occasionally, you may want to have a third person there to serve as a Control Operator in addition to an Op and a Logger. It may be that the latter two are both Techs or even unlicensed. In this case, you need someone with a higher class license to legally operate in all or part of the band. Remember, the club callsign doesn't grant operating privileges. There must be a control op present to define the op privileges at that specific transmitter. (That doesn't mean that he's asleep in the tent nearby. The Control Op must be present at the controls.)

You will also have Drop-in operators. This is fine, but what do you do when you have a drop-in op and a scheduled operator arrives? Simple- the drop-in op surrenders and the scheduled op gets the chair, unless he chooses not to. After all, the scheduled operator made a firm commitment.

How long or short should the operating blocks be? One hour? Two? Longer? How many ops are beating a path to your door? If there are a lot, and your goal is to give everyone a chance, then shorter operating blocks are better. Going for maximum impact? Then put a contest operator in the chair for a 4 hour block. It depends on your station and how you want it to run. Let's look at three different philosophies.

In the middle, there is a mixed philosophy. For instance, on 80 SSB, you can operate with any level of intensity you want while the sun is up, but from sundown to about 3 a.m., you may want to make sure that your station is staffed with highly skilled operators.

The award for Most Relaxed Station goes to the Get On The Air or GOTA station at any FD site. This station is about teaching new HF operators how to operate the station, how to make and log contacts, and answering any questions that these operators will have. It isn't about making mountains of contacts, it's about getting new, inexperienced and/or inactive hams on HF. It's essentially a classroom and the image of no-pressure operation.

At the other extreme are 20 and 40 meter bands and CW in general. (Remember, this is my subjective experience.) These are stations where a Field Day effort makes the biggest bang for the buck! These two bands are active around the clock (depending on the Solar Cycle), and CW operations tend to lean towards the highly competitive

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experience because CW contacts are worth twice the number of points. Also, CW ops tend to have a bit more experience on HF. In short, these categories are usually out to make lots and lots of contacts.

There are also Digital and VHF and above, satellite and demonstration stations, but each has its unique flavor. Since I haven't really operated those stations, I'll just say go talk to the band captains for those stations to get a feel for them.

The bottom line is that you need to line up operators to work the station. Unless you plan to do most of the operating, you'll regret not doing this.

### **Lots of Lists!**

Make lists, lots of lists. Equipment lists. People lists. "Must Do" lists. "Would Like to Do" lists. Make lists of every aspect of the FD effort. After this, start combining schedules with lists. Lists of what to do become schedules of when to do and who will do them. Equipment lists will add columns for when and where something needs to go, and who will handle it. Don't forget about who owns the equipment and the details about returning the hardware.

If you can think of it, put it in a list. Better to be too thorough now than scrambling for something on Saturday morning during Field Day weekend. It will also make things run a lot smoother as time goes on.

### **Plan for yourself!**

While doing all this, you need to plan for yourself. This has several meanings. What do you want to do personally? When do you want to operate? What aspects of setup and teardown do you want to personally supervise or do? What would you rather hand off to someone else? These are as much about making the event enjoyable for yourself as they are about making it fun for others.

What resources are available from the club? What do you have to *pay* for? What will the club reimburse for? If you're not careful, being a band captain can be an expensive proposition. For many hams, this isn't an issue and they gladly donate materials and expenses. Others may not be so fortunate. Consider what your personal situation is and what you are willing or not willing to do. (You really should have answered this before you agreed to be a BC.)

Is the club seeking donations from local businesses to support the effort? Many businesses can be enticed to do this, especially if it is a tax-deductible donation and if you are thanking them properly. Let them know about the public service and emergency

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support functions of amateur radio. Be sure to put up signage at the site pointing out the donations from *each business by name*. But I digress. That's for the event coordinators, not so much for the Band Captains.

The point here is *don't get caught up in the moment and overextend yourself*. It's like bidding in an auction. In the heat of the moment, you might bid twice the amount you planned. Same thing. You could easily spend a few hundred bucks that you hadn't considered, just by buying a few things here and a few more there, just because they're "needed" or would be nice to have. Overextending applies both to money and time management.

## Summary

Okay, it's been a long discussion, but there's a lot of useful info and a lot of pitfalls to avoid. I didn't provide a complete guide to Field Day, just the skeleton of being a Band Captain. There's a lot that follows on from all this and anyone should be able to figure out the remaining details from here.

In summary, here's what you need to do:

1. Start NOW!
2. Get Organized. Make Lists. Plan what needs to happen and when.
3. Get Help! Lots of help! Get people committed to helping with setup, teardown and operation.
4. Coordinate with the FD Chair and the other Band Captains
5. Spread the workload around.
6. Plan for yourself.

Plan well in advance and stick to a plan. Do it right and the experience will be fun – for you and for everyone at your station. Wait until the last minute to scramble at the end and it will be miserable. The most important goal is simple:

Start early and have lots of fun!

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## Ham Radio at the Raleigh Marathon

**Article by Gary Pearce KN4AQ, RARS Public Information Officer**



Officially it's the "City of Oaks" Marathon, perhaps to distance itself from the ill-fated Raleigh Marathon of the turn of the century, when the lead police vehicle took a wrong turn... two years in a row.

Anyway, 9 hams helped out with communications for the officials, coordinated by Carolina Helping Hams' Bill Cole

KG4CXY. Considering that this event took place mostly in the city limits, with good cell service, police and EMS radios on VIPER and who-knows what else, you might say it was “over-communicated.” But most of the information reaching the director was filtered through Don Downs WA4AVU.

We had hams in the two lead police cars – one for the full Marathon, and one for the half Marathon. Each had one of the RARS APRS Trackers that Don recently upgraded with new TNCs, GPSs and antennas. The trackers beacons their positions once a minute, and Don monitored them with a laptop as he shadowed the director. John AI4RT was in the full Marathon lead, and Gary KN4AQ was in the half Marathon Lead. When the half Marathon finished, Gary caught up with the “last runner” entourage and beacons that position, though he was pulled away to SAG a few runners. See the tracker maps by going to [www.aprs.fi](http://www.aprs.fi) and entering either W4DW-2 (half marathon) or W4DW-3 (full marathon), and digging around for some history.

In previous years, we had trouble getting all our APRS beacons through on the official APRS channel 144.39. The KD4PBS digipeater is way up in the air and hears a lot of traffic, so maybe some of our beacons were lost to what the packet folks call “collisions” (and the rest of us call “doubling”). So we put our packet traffic on the 146.64 repeater, while voice operation was mostly on KD4PBS’ 442.075 repeater. It worked well! Steve KJ4BX put up an “I-Gate” – a digipeater that passes traffic to the Internet – so we show up on aprs.fi, even though we weren’t on 144.39.

Each lead police car also carried a race official who gave very careful directions. Both routes stayed on course! There were no major problems – all in all, a very smooth event.

Thanks to these hams who participated:

- |          |                  |          |              |
|----------|------------------|----------|--------------|
| • WW4TLB | Thomas Babb      | • K2HYD  | Ray Albers   |
| • KG4CXY | Bill Cole        | • KJ4OBQ | CJ Orr       |
| • KI4YXM | Bob Chew         | • AI4RT  | John Snellen |
| • KJ4PZR | Jonathan Poverud | • KN4AQ  | Gary Pearce  |
| • WA2YBM | Jack Donnelly    |          |              |
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# What It Takes!

**Article by Ken McEwen, RARS At-Large Director**

As board members, we are expected to do "what it takes" to get a particular job done. In this case, I offered to take on the job of the picnic, after the RARS Fest.

This is a "Thanks for a job well done" project, and is open to all Fest workers and their families. This event has been traditionally held at some venue that has a wide variety of activities. In recent years, the chosen location was Lake Crabtree county Park, near RDU airport.

Since I was given no restrictions, except a loose budget, the sky was the limit! Well, guess again. I did want to change some things though. Let's take first things first.

## **Location**

Lake Crabtree Park has served us well, but it is quite a trip for several of us (55 miles, round trip for me, more for others). Upon request, I checked out a couple of other locations during the month of January. While closer to Raleigh, each had differences that, upon inspection and comparison, did not make a change advantageous.

## **Date**

This part was to be a challenge, bigger than I expected. Whenever one tries to schedule something like this, you can be sure it won't fit everyone's calendar. To minimize the fallout, I relied on several sources.

I first reviewed the calendar. RARS Fest is Apr. 22 & 23. I decided against the week after RARS Fest, Apr. 29 & 30. (It's not nice to tie up folks two weekends in a row, even if one event is to eat). A weekend in May seemed preferable, so as not to be too hot, or too far from RARS Fest. After all this is a RARS Fest associated event!

Next to be reviewed was Hank, K4HM's Fest calendar, on the web. We now have the first weekend in May, which is Spartanburg, SC; the second weekend, Rockingham, NC; the third weekend, Dayton, Ohio; and the last weekend, Durham Fest. In June, things become even more conflicted.

Let's look at the "public service" calendar. John, AI4RT was a big help there. He said that things were pretty clear until the first of June. After that, there is at least one event every weekend!

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O. K. It looks like May will have to be it! Considering the fore mentioned, the first weekend in May will be our first choice (sorry Spartanburg Fest fans). The second choice falls on the Dayton weekend.

(I know that Dayton is the BIG one, but not everyone goes to it.) Let's move on. The final date is not totally our choice!

## **Application**

The park only accepts reservations on a "first come, first served" basis, after Feb 7.

That's cool. When I called, on the afternoon of Feb. 8, all of the picnic shelters had been booked by a single organization, on our preferred dates. For our two backup dates, the large shelter we usually use had already been taken also. (Those folks must have been camping out at the gate to get their dates!)

But all is not lost! The remaining shelters, while smaller, are closer to the boating and rest room facilities. They both have grills, for cooking, access to all activity areas and all the other amenities. The one I booked is the White Oak shelter. It has an active 110 v.a.c. outlet. This may power a radio, if anyone wants to bring one. Would "talk in" be of interest?

## **Food**

This is all important at a ham radio event. I am a great fan of barbecue, fried chicken, and fixin's. Since we will probably have a similar menu at RARS Fest, and / or the field day dinner, I think a change is in order!

I would like to use the grill, next to the shelter, to cook on site. The menu has not been settled upon at this time, but I am leaning toward a selection of hamburgers, hot dogs, grilled chicken, with sides and deserts provided by participants (that means you). With this approach, there should be something there to suit everyone's liking!

## **Activities**

The park has numerous activities available, for all ages.

Several hiking trails, over various terrains are always available.

The flood plain (excellent for kites & field games), sand volleyball courts, and playground equipment are all public areas (not reservable).

The waterfront has several types of watercraft (non-motorized) available for rental to individuals.

Fishing is catch and release only, and requires appropriate license.

The park also has a list of rules that must be adhered to, but I will cover those later. They are not terrible, but are there to help remind us to leave the park in better shape than we found it!

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## **Attendance & Food Coordination**

You haven't heard the end of this yet! As time gets closer, Kay (my xyl) and I will be seeking attendance numbers, and asking for volunteers to bring salads, side dishes, and those all important deserts! This also requires coordination, on our part, so we don't wind up with 10 potato salads, and no cookies! We are already making up lists of things to bring that will help make this a phenomenal success!

## **Recap**

The RARS Fest workers Thank You picnic will be held:

When: Saturday, May 21, 2011  
Arrive after 9:00 am. (park opening)  
Eat 4 to 5 p.m.  
Leave by 6:30 p.m. (park closes at dark)  
Equipment rental is personal option  
Where: Lake Crabtree County Park  
White Oak shelter (third drive to right inside park)  
1400 Aviation Parkway  
Morrisville, NC  
Contacts for attendance & side dish coordination:  
e-mail [kennethkay@bellsouth.net](mailto:kennethkay@bellsouth.net)  
phone Ken 919-270-8773

Bring the whole family. Enjoy a day at the park!  
Fishing, kayaks, canoes, sail boats, hikes, kites, playground for kids, etc.

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## **January 18, 2011 RARS Board Meeting Minutes** **Minutes by Charles Swindell WB4DCM, RARS Secretary**

Present: John AI4RT, Jack N6UYB, Karl W4CHX, Hank K4HM, Don WA4AVU, Ken KI4OTO, Selene KG4RMT, Mary Jo K4MJL, Chuck K4HF, CJ KJ4OBQ, Gary KN4AQ, Greg KE4PAX, Charles WB4DCM

Guests: David KF4VXJ, Bob KB4RGC, Rich NC4EN

Apologies and/or emailed reports: Virginia NC4VA

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- 1) Call to order (Karl W4CHX): The meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM. A welcome was extended to all and in particular our new Board members and guests.
- 2) Approval of minutes (Karl W4CHX and Charles WB4DCM): The minutes of the November 16, 2010 Board meeting were approved as amended.
- 3) Vice President (CJ KJ4OBQ): VP CJ reported that Hank K4MK Web Master has developed a web page to track what is for sale on the RARS table at RARSFest. This is an online form. RARS will charge a fee of 10% to a maximum of \$25. The form will be accessed via [rars.org/festtable.php](http://rars.org/festtable.php). The February program will be "Awards and Wallpaper". The March program will be on volunteering.
- 4) Treasurer's report (Greg KE4PAX): Treasurer Greg KE4PAX reported that RARS now has 259 members. Any member wishing additional details on the RARS budget should contact Greg.
- 5) Secretary's report (Charles WB4DCM): Reported that sympathy cards and memorials have been sent on behalf of our deceased members George Herring and Tom Alexander. By motion, second, and vote, it was agreed to reimburse Secretary Charles for the memorials.
- 6) Committee reports:
  - a) Public Service Director (John AI4RT): No report
  - b) Public Information Officer (Gary KN4AQ): Gary announced that he will attend the B.E.S.T. conference at the McKimmon Center on February 9 and will be a presenter. The conference is free but you must register on line.
  - c) Education Director (Virginia NC4VA): Virginia was not present but had sent an email to Karl W4CHX to ask our Treasurer Greg to send a gratuity and thank you note to both First Alliance Church and Glen Royal Baptist Church for use of their buildings during our last Technician License preparation class. Treasurer Greg advised that the checks had been sent.
  - d) Field Day Chair (Bob W4TTX): No report.
  - e) FM Repeater Chair (Gary KN4AQ): Gary announced that a new system has been developed to provide announcements on the 146.64 repeater. In addition, Gary was investigating a new site for the 145.13 repeater.
  - f) RARSFest Chair (John AI4RT): John announced that the first meeting of the RARSFest committee would be on Monday, January 24 at 7:00 PM at the TRRS board room. There is a signup sheet on the RARS web page for volunteers. A team leader is needed for the talk in. A new multi-color flyer has been developed to send out that is sure to bring additional attendees.

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- g) Exciter Chair (Courtney KI4HOS): No report. There was a comment that the Exciter needs to be published in time for the members to read it prior to the meeting. One delaying factor is that the Board minutes of the previous month are not approved until the Board meeting the following month.
- h) Hospitality Chair (Mary Jo K4MJL): No report.
- i) Net Manager (Mary KG4OQA): No report.
- j) ARRL Liaison (Chuck K4HF): No report.
- k) At-Large Director (Don WA4AVU): No report.
- l) At-Large Director (Ken KI4OTO): No report.
- m) At-Large Director (Jack N6UYB): No report.
- n) W4DW/W4RNC Trustee (Jeff AC4ZO): No report. Jack N6UYB did comment that RARS has now had an additional call, N4RAL, issued to it.
- o) RARSVE Coordinators (Joe WA4GIR and Liz KO4CK): No report.
- p) RARS Web Master (Hank K4HM): No report.

#### 7) Old Business:

- a) Donation of software to RARS (Justin AJ4MJ): No report.
- b) Nomination for Club of the Year Award, Dayton Hamvention 2011: Karl W4CHX indicated that the nomination form and supporting documentation were submitted on January 14 and 15, 2011. Karl W4CHX expressed his gratitude for the assistance provided by many RARS members, including Gary KN4AQ, John AI4RT, Chuck K4HF, Greg KE4PAX, Virginia NC4VA, Cliff W4FT, / Bob K4RLC, Mary KG4OQA, Charlie WB4DCM, Hank K4HM, CJ KJ4OBQ, and Ken KI4OTO. A copy of the application was available for review.

#### 8) New Business:

- a) Education Award (Karl W4CHX): ARRL is accepting nominations for the Herb S. Brier Instructor of the Year Award. The deadline for nominations is March 15, 2011. Karl W4CHX expressed the opinion that we have several folks that are possible candidates for this award.
- b) Job Descriptions (Hank K4HM): Hank took the floor to discuss an issue concerning job descriptions of the club officers. He is establishing a web page, [RARS.org/rarsjob.php](http://RARS.org/rarsjob.php). All officers need to write a job description and pass it onto their successor. When complete, the page will be viewable by RARS members only. Therein followed some discussion about the format the job descriptions should take. It was concluded that it is going to be very time consuming to set up a template for the job descriptions. There was some brief discussion about the responsibility/job of an at-large director.
- c) Strategic planning (Ken KI4OTO): Ken briefly described a lack of planning and

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coordinating he experienced in private industry and the problems that it brought about. He suggested that our officers needed some strategic planning. Karl W4CHX discussed the issue but felt that each committee/group could expend an extensive amount of time when we are a hobby group.

- d) Official RARS photographer (Ken KI4OTO): Ken raised the issue of the desirability of having someone designated as a photographer to track the events of RARS. He commented that photo's could be used to make reports more interesting and readable. Even with other people taking photos, the official photographer could correlate the pictures. The VP will bring a camera to all meetings.
- e) Field Day 2011: donations and in-kind services project (David KF4VXJ): David commented that we would expend about \$400 to \$500 on gasoline for Field Day. After some discussion, we agreed to try to have gas cards donated rather than the actual gasoline. David passed out a copy of a form to be completed for donations from Whole Foods Market. He also requested some assistance in acquiring donations.
- f) Request for donation to support a plaque for the NC QSO Party: Marty W4MY has asked that RARS consider sponsoring an awards plaque for the NC QSO Party, which would cost \$30. After discussing whether RARS should pay for a plaque and did we have the money in the budget, a motion was made, seconded, and approved to expend \$30 for the plaque.
- g) Bereavement donations (Greg KE4PAX): Greg advised that RARS has made donations to the Dick Bitner Benevolent Fund and on one occasion sent flowers in memory of a deceased member. Deceased former members' families traditionally have only been sent a sympathy card. The Board then had a discussion about how much should be expended for a memorial for deceased members and what should be done for deceased former members. A motion was made by Chuck K4HF that RARS send a sympathy card to the family of a deceased former member; and, a sympathy card and a \$25 memorial to the charity of choice of the family of a deceased current member until a review can be conducted to determine the propriety of making the donation to the Dick Bitner Benevolent fund rather than the charity of choice of the family. The motion was seconded by Don WA4AVU and passed following discussion.
- h) RARS dinner (Karl W4CHX): Since our regularly scheduled dinner for January 11 was cancelled due to snow, Karl suggested that we have a "make up" dinner on January 25. This will not change our usual second Tuesday dinner schedule, it would only will be a "make up" dinner for January. An announcement will be put on the 146.64 repeater.

9) Board member comments:

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- a) Hank K4HM advised that he has developed a new method to replace your email address and allow your address to remain private. Next he suggested that we need some technique to track all of our general rules of order, motions, etc. After some discussion, he will develop a web page and track them on a go forward basis.
- b) Ken KI4OTO briefly revisited the issue of bereavement donations.
- c) Mary Jo K4MJL raised the issue of having everyone sign in when attending a RARS meeting. This is important for visitors to sign in. She also raised the issue of being friendly and talking with the folks that are sitting around you. We want our visitors to feel welcome.
- d) John AI4RT reminded everyone of the RARSFest meeting on Monday, January 24.
- e) Greg KE4PAX advised that he will miss the February meeting. He also commented that the RARS Board as listed on the Exciter needs to be updated with the names of the new Board members.
- f) Bob KB4RGC (visitor) due to time constraints, briefly mentioned three items: Echo Link on local repeaters; how to get new members; and putting tower location for our repeaters on APRS maps. Gary KN4AQ and Don WA4AUV will work on items 1 & 3. These items will be discussed in more detail at the next Board meeting.

10) Adjournment (Karl W4CHX): 9:31 PM

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## **February 1, 2011 RARS Meeting Minutes**

### **Minutes by Charles Swindell WB4DCM, RARS Secretary**

- 1) Call to order: The meeting was called to order at 7:32 PM by Karl W4CHX. There were 55 people in attendance including 7 guests.
- 2) Approval of minutes: The minutes of the RARS General Membership meeting of January 4, 2011 were approved as written. President Karl W4CHX commented that the Exciter was published earlier this month and expressed thanks to our Editor, Courtney.
- 3) Vice President's report (CJ KJ4OBQ): The March program will be on the RARSFest. The RARS web page has provisions for volunteers to sign up to help. VP CJ KJ4OBQ then did a quick skit about signing up equipment to be sold at the RARS

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table. Go to the RARS web page, members only, RARS table, and sign in your sale items prior to the RARSFest.

- 4) Treasurer's report (Greg KE4PAX): Treasurer Greg KE4PAX was not present at the meeting. Any member with questions should contact Greg KE4PAX or Karl W4CHX.
- 5) Announcements (Karl W4CHX):
  - a) RARS Dinner: second Tuesday, (2-8-11), 6:30PM, Golden Corral, on Glenwood Ave (Hwy 70 W), monitor the 146.64 repeater on Tuesday (2-8-11) for any update information.
  - b) RARS Board meeting: third Tuesday (2-15-11), 7:00PM, Triangle Radio Reading Service, 211 E. Six Forks Rd, Suite 103; any RARS member is welcome to attend. For more information, contact any RARS officer.
  - c) After meeting gathering: Depending on the time of the program completion: Applebee's, Six Forks Rd and Wake Forest Rd (by the Costco).
  - d) Maker Faire NC: The following information was provided to Karl W4CHX by Raymond "Woody" K3VSA, the ARRL Public Information Coordinator for North Carolina. Maker Faire will be held on Saturday, June 18 in the Kerr Scott Building, NC State Fairgrounds. Maker Faire is an annual event that tends to attract "do-it-yourself" people". The event is affiliated with Make magazine, a publication for individuals that like to build items, either new or using previously used items. RARS has been invited to join DFMA and OCRA in sponsoring a table at Maker Faire; examples of items to be displayed could include kit radios, a learning to solder station, etc. It has been noted that the individuals attracted to Maker Faire are likely to be individuals that should be recruited to become involved in amateur radio. What is needed for this proposed activity is a leader to ramrod the project. Any volunteers?
  - e) Guests: John Singleton, N4AJR and children Becky, John V, and Alex; Travis Brown KI4KNB; Tara Wooten KB3UTX; and Chris McCormick N3JHR.
- 6) Reports from RARS Board members and others:
  - a) John AI4RT RARSFest Chair announced that the 39 annual RARSFest will be held on Saturday, April 23, 2011 in the Jim Graham Building at the NC State Fair Grounds. Go to the RARS web page for more details. Volunteers are needed. You may sign up on the RARS web page. The RARSFest is the only

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money making project that RARS does and it supports our organization and activities.

b) John AI4RT Ham Public Service Coordinator announced that the next public service event will be the Odyssey of the Mind on Saturday, March 5. Please go to the RARS web page, public service button and volunteer.

c) John AI4RT Emergency Coordinator for Wake County ARES announced the weekly net is conducted on Thursdays about 9:15PM following the Piedmont Coastal Traffic Net on 146.88.

7) Any other business: There was no other business.

8) Program: VP CJ KJ4OBQ introduced Jeff AC4OZ. Jeff's program was "Awards and Wallpaper". Jeff then took the floor and provided a through and detailed program on awards and certificates that are available to amateur radio operators. It was quite obvious that he had invested a large amount of time in the preparation of his program as it was both interesting and informative.

9) Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 PM by Karl W4CHX.

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j)

# Local Amateur Radio Nets

Join us every evening at 8 PM on the 146.640 repeater for the **RARS Two-Meter Net**. You can give a ragchew, check in and out (this counts for our total numbers reported to the ARRL!), make announcements, and pass traffic. We also offer National Traffic System traffic training. All licensed stations are welcome to participate in the net as often as they can. This net is also a great way to learn about amateur radio if you are newly licensed!

## Central Carolina SKYWARN

Please join us each Tuesday @ 9:15 PM on the 146.880 repeater for the CCS net. On each net there are announcements, check-ins by county, and often a program or training spot. Check us out at [www.centralcarolinaskywarn.net](http://www.centralcarolinaskywarn.net).

The **PCTN (Piedmont Costal Traffic Net)** meets every night at 9 PM on the 146.880. The purpose of the net is to handle/pass NTS formal messages. Amateur stations are encouraged to check in and participate. The backup repeater is the 147.105 (PL tone 82.5).

The **Wake County ARES Net** meets Thursdays around 2115 on the 146.880 repeater. We provide discussion and training for the implementation and provision of emergency communications for our served agencies, such as the American

Red Cross and the local and state Emergency Operations Center. Please join us. For more information, check out [www.wakeares.org](http://www.wakeares.org).

Please join us on the **Carolina 440 Net** every Monday night at 7:30 PM. This ragchew net utilizes the Carolina 440 UHF Link Repeater System. Comprised of the Raleigh, Down East, and Coastal Wilmington link systems, there are currently 19 repeaters on the system, covering 21,168 square miles. For a list of these repeaters, please visit [www.carolina440.net](http://www.carolina440.net).

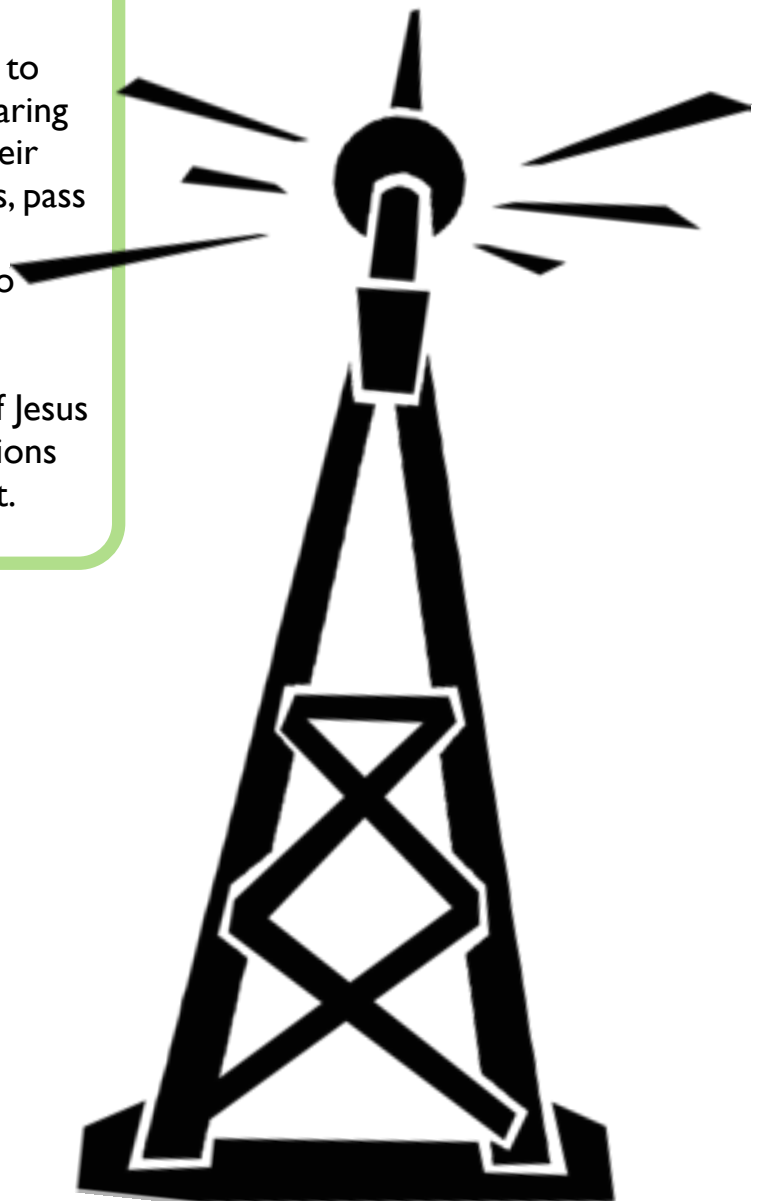
# Local Amateur Radio Nets

The **RARS Technical & Trader's Net** is held on Saturday evenings on the 146.640 at 8:30 PM.

## **Apex Emergency Response Communications Net**

This net meets weekly each Sunday evening @ 9 PM on the 146.640 repeater. The purpose of the net is to assist ham radio operators in preparing to respond to emergencies, test their equipment, improve operating skills, pass traffic, and to provide those with a common interest an opportunity to meet. The Apex ERC Net provides amateur radio emergency communications for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. All stations are invited to participate in this net.

The **VOIP Hurricane Net** is held Sundays at 00:00 UTC on the 146.775 repeater with a tone of 88.5 (IRLP node 4260). For information about activation details, go to [www.voipwx.net](http://www.voipwx.net).



## RARS Classifieds

Looking to add a new radio to your shack? Have an antenna for sale? Browse the RARS classifieds for new and used radio equipment at <http://rars.org/classifieds.php>.

RARS members are welcome to post notices about equipment they are selling. Posts last for 30 days and are editable at any time.

Using our classifieds is a great way for buyers to search for available items and for sellers to reach a local, targeted audience.

*The Raleigh Amateur Radio Society's*

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